

Moving Waters



the Colorado River & the West

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“MOVING WATERS: THE COLORADO RIVER & THE WEST” DEBUTS

A Seven-State Project Exploring the History & Meaning of the Colorado River

(Phoenix, AZ) Seven state humanities councils from seven western states in the Colorado River basin are collaborating on an ambitious project, “*Moving Waters: The Colorado River & the West.*” This multi-dimensional program will explore the legal history of the Colorado River; the impact of people and economies on the rivershed; and the stories, legends and lore of this critical water source through a variety of media, including lectures, book discussions, exhibitions and an original radio documentary.

The project brings together seven states and 22 communities and cities in Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming, all of which owe their existence - directly and indirectly - to the Colorado River.

“In the modern West, most of the population centers are far from the river banks,” explained Dan Shilling, Executive Director for the Arizona Humanities Council, which is spearheading this project.

“Because many of us do not actually see the river in front of us, we do not recognize that our very existence in the West is dependant on this river and its vast watershed. This project will reintroduce the river to the West, not only as a physical entity, but also as a cultural and social force that shapes how we live in the West.”

“Moving Waters: The Colorado River & the West”, opens in December, 2001 in Arizona with a six-part radio series in Yuma, followed by lectures, book discussions and exhibitions held in Phoenix, Page, Parker and Yuma at local libraries and museums. Activities continue in Arizona through April 2002.

The project concludes in Wyoming with events scheduled from April through July 2002 at the Green River, Pinedale and Rock Springs.

California will produce programming from January through April 2002. Events will take place in San Bernardino, Needles and Imperial. Colorado will stage events from January through April 2002 with programming happening in Denver, Glenwood Springs and Grand Junction. Nevada will participate from February through May 2002 with scheduled programs held in Las Vegas, Boulder and Laughlin.

New Mexico will hold events from February through May 2002 in Santa Fe, Farmington and Silver City; while Utah will participate from April through July 2002 with programming in Salt Lake City, Moab and Vernal.

Landmark bookend lectures are planned to launch and conclude this unique project. In January 2002, Dudley Gardner, a representative from the river source in Wyoming, will travel to the river delta in Yuma, Arizona to speak on issues related to the river. And in late spring, Jose Campoy, a representative from the delta area, will journey to the source of the river in Pinedale to discuss critical Colorado River issues from his perspective.

In addition to these representatives, the project will feature legal scholars who will present “Water Wars: An Introduction to the Law of the River.” These lectures will provide the context and history of the complexity of Colorado River water rights. Other highlights of the project include book and reading discussion series that will take place at the participating communities. These will be based upon *A Colorado River Reader*, edited by Richard F. Fleck and published by the University of Utah Press. Mr. Fleck will write a lecture and study guides for the project themes.

Additionally, as part of the extensive project, seven copies of a traveling exhibit will be created and displayed at participating venues in all 22 communities.

Original documentary radio programming was created especially for “*Moving Waters.*” Six 30 minute radio programs were produced by well-known interviewer and producer Jack Loeffler, who began traveling the length and breadth of the project in March 2001 to create these programs. In all, Loeffler interviewed 70 people, including Hopi educators, ethnobotanists, authors, lawyers, ranchers, poets, historians and environmentalists, to hear their fascinating, wide-ranging yet intensely personal stories of the river. Former Director of the Bureau of Reclamation, Floyd Dominy, and Stewart Udall, Secretary of the Interior under President Kennedy, are among those interviewed.

The radio programs will air in each site two weeks prior to the launch of local programming in that region. Programs will cover the Colorado River ecosystem, law and litigation, communities and economies, legends and stories, and clashes over values bringing the river to listeners throughout the West.

In addition to attending lectures, book discussions, exhibition, and radio documentaries, the public also will be able to track the progress of this project through The Moving Waters web site.

The site, www.movingwaters.org, will showcase the progress of the extensive project as it begins in Arizona and winds throughout the watershed to end in Wyoming at the river’s source.

“*Moving Waters: The Colorado River & The West*” is being coordinated by the Arizona Humanities Council. Dan Shilling created the concept for the project which is under the direction of Nancy Dallett, Project Coordinator. *Moving Waters* is funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Ford Foundation. For more information about this project, state and community participation, lectures, book discussions and exhibitions, contact Nancy Dallett at 602-257-0335 ext. 23 or atndallett@aol.com.

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